

CYCLIZED AMINO ACID DERIVATIVES

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuing application of co-
5 pending International Patent Application PCT/US00/18577,
filed July 6, 2000, which claims priority of United
States provisional patent 60/142,404, filed July 6, 1999.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to cyclized amino
10 acid derivatives for treating or preventing neuronal
damage associated with neurological diseases. The
invention also provides compositions comprising the
compounds of the present invention and methods of
utilizing those compositions for treating or preventing
15 neuronal damage.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Neurological diseases are associated with the
death of or injury to neuronal cells. Typical treatment
of neurological diseases involves drugs capable of
20 inhibiting neuronal cell death. A more recent approach
involves the promotion of nerve regeneration by promoting
neuronal growth.

Neuronal growth, which is critical for the
survival of neurons, is stimulated *in vitro* by nerve
25 growth factors (NGF). For example, Glial Cell Line-
Derived Neurotrophic Factor (GDNF) demonstrates
neurotrophic activity both, *in vivo* and *in vitro*, and is
currently being investigated for the treatment of
Parkinson's disease. Insulin and insulin-like growth
30 factors have been shown to stimulate growth of neurites
in rat pheochromocytoma PC12 cells and in cultured
sympathetic and sensory neurons [Recio-Pinto et al., J.
Neurosci., 6, pp. 1211-1219 (1986)]. Insulin and

100393938-010302